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ABSTRACT

Upon request from parents, students were released from a rural Rocky Mountains high school to take a class in religious education where they were encouraged to read at least one chapter of scripture each day. In addition to daily reading, students were encouraged to ponder what they read and apply it to their daily lives. According to the pre-practicum survey data, students had been in school 5 months. When asked how many of the 5 months they had read daily, 30% had not read daily any month. An additional 30% had read daily for three months or less. Only 25% of the students reported that they often or always pondered the scriptures as they read, and 35% of the students reported that they tried to apply what they read to their daily lives. A scripture reading program was organized where teachers, parents, and ecclesiastical leaders combined their efforts and encouraged the students to read, ponder, and apply the scriptures. Parents and ecclesiastical leaders were provided with motivational statements valuing scripture reading and a reading chart. In the post-practicum survey, 57% of the students reported that they had read daily for at least four of the five months they had been in school, an increase of 40% from the pre-practicum survey. Results also indicated very little change in the percentage of students who reported having pondered or applied the scriptures. (Contains 16 references and 13 tables of data. Appendixes present the church mission statement, student survey instrument, program descriptions, program charts and schedules, and sample certificates and stickers.) (RS)

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ED 381 756

INCREASING SCRIPTURE READING IN A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SETTING THROUGH COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF PARENTS, CHURCH LEADERS, AND TEACHERS

by

C. Mark Peterson

Cluster XLVI

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Practicum II Report

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1995

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

Mar. 3, 1995
Date of Final Approval of Report

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ABSTRACT

Increasing Scripture Reading in a Religious Education Setting Through Cooperative Efforts of Parents, Church Leaders, and Teachers. Peterson, C. Mark, 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D Program in Child and Youth Studies. Reading/Scripture Reading/Parental Involvement/Ecclesiastical Leaders/Religious Education

Upon request from parents, students were released from school to take a class in religious education. Students were taught the doctrine of the sponsoring church and encouraged to read at least one chapter of scripture each day. In addition to daily reading, students were encouraged to ponder what they read and to apply it to their daily lives. To the date of the pre-practicum survey, students had been in school five months. When asked how many of the five months they had read daily, 30% had not read daily any month. An additional 30% had read daily for three months or less. Only 25% of the students reported that they often or always pondered the scriptures as they read and 35% of the students reported that they tried to apply what they read to their daily life.

The writer reasoned that much more was accomplished when teachers, parents, and interested others, in this case, ecclesiastical leaders, worked together. He organized a scripture reading program where all three interested groups combined their efforts and encouraged the students to read, ponder and apply the scriptures. Parents and ecclesiastical leaders were provided with motivational statements valuing scripture reading and a reading chart.

Fifty-nine percent of the students reported that they had read one chapter from the scriptures each day for at least four of the first five months of school. This was an increase of 19%. There was very little change in the percent of students who reported having pondered or applied the scriptures.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting and Community

The writer lives and works in a rural community located in the Rocky Mountains. It is a community made up of 11,000 residents of which 91% are Caucasian and 9% Hispanic. The community is surrounded by ten other smaller communities. Much of the population of the area rests outside of any city limit. The two county area has a population of 40,000 residents.

The area is economically agricultural. A very large majority of the residents owe their livelihood to this industry. Farm and ranch owners, farm and irrigation equipment suppliers, fertilizer, grain elevator, and product processing plants are some of the businesses that exist because of agriculture.

The most recent figures available indicate the per capita income to be $10,943, which is in the 71st percentile nationally and in the 92nd percentile state wide.

The one high school (grades 10-12) and one junior high school (grades 7-9) have a population of 1606 students. The schools serve the students residing in and around the community and naturally reflect the socioeconomic

characteristics of the community.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The predominant church in the community sponsors a Church Educational System (CES). Leaders of the church encourage students, grades 9-12, to enroll in a church religion class along with their high school and college curriculum. In high school it is called seminary and in college it is called institute.

CES has three delivery systems to its seminary students. Home study is available to students who live in areas where church membership is small and scattered over a large geographic area. As membership grows, and as geography allows, students are organized into an early morning class. These students meet before the regular school day and are taught by volunteers.

Where church membership warrants, and where governmental law permits, students are released from school one period each day to attend a seminary class. Parents must request that students be released from school. This type of seminary is referred to as "released time". One of these three types of seminary is provided for its members in all 50 states and in 112 foreign countries. Students meet in church-owned buildings and full-time teachers, who teach the released time students, are employees of CES.

For 26 years the writer has been employed by CES and is currently assigned as principal of the released time

seminary in the community. He is also a Regional Coordinator and helps to supervise six other seminaries. Of the 616 church members enrolled in school (grades 9-12), 502 of them are enrolled in seminary. In addition to the writer, three full-time and one part-time instructors are employed by CES and teach at the seminary.

The duties of a seminary principal are similar to the duties of a traditional high school principal. He does not hire/fire faculty members, but he coordinates class scheduling, teacher inservice, setting and maintaining seminary policy, sets budgetary items and he teaches two classes. He works closely with local ecclesiastical leaders to enroll all students who will attend. Students at the school who are not members of the sponsoring church are welcome to attend provided their attendance is requested by their parents.

The goals and objectives of seminary are clearly established. The mission statements of the church and CES, and the Commission of CES to its faculty and administrators, are included in Appendix A. Students are taught tenents of the church as revealed to church leaders and from books accepted by the church as scripture.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Upon request from parents, students were released from school to take a class in religious education. Part of successfully completing each seminary course and receiving the most personal value from their attendance, students needed to carefully read the volume of scripture being taught that year. On a rotating basis, students study the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of Mormon. The year involving the practicum, the students studied the Book of Mormon. Students needed to read at least one chapter from the Book of Mormon each day. By doing this, they would completely read the book during the school year. As they read they needed to meditate and see how they could apply what they read to their daily lives.

Briefly stated then, the problem was: Few students were reading a chapter each day from the scriptures (i.e. The New Testament or The Book of Mormon). Few students were meditating on what they read or applying what they read to their lives.

Problem Documentation

Daily reading the scriptures was a topic regularly discussed by teachers with their students. Teachers

indicated that it was their observation that few students were reading the scriptures daily.

At the end of the school year the Seniors were honored at a graduation. Of the students honored at the 1993 graduation, less than 4% of the graduates had read each day for their four years of seminary, 6% had read daily for three years, 8% for two years, 12% for one year, and 70% had not read daily from the scriptures for even one year.

A student survey (Appendix B) indicated that few students were reading on a daily basis. When asked how many of the nine months of the last school year they had read daily, 29% indicated that they had not read daily any month. Another 26% had read daily for less than four months. Only 17% of the students reported that they had read daily for all nine months of the previous school year. Table 1 is a summary of the findings.

TABLE 1

Number of Months Students Read Daily During Past School Year

Number of months students read daily	Percent of students
0	29
1	7
2	7
3	5
4	7
5	10
6	4
7	10
8	5
9	17

To the date of the pre-practicum survey, students had been in school five months during that school year. When asked how many of the five months they had read daily, 30% had not read daily any month (Table 2). An additional 30% had read daily for three months or less. Only 29% of the high school seminary students had read daily all five months of the current school year.

TABLE 2

Number of Months Students Read Daily During the Current School Year

Number of months students read daily	Percent of students
0	30
1	11
2	7
3	12
4	11
5	29

In the same survey, students were asked how many days they had read in the past 30 days (Table 3). There were 28% who had read less than 5 days.

TABLE 3

Number of Days Students Read in the Last 30 Days

Number of days students read daily	Percent of students
0- 5	28
6-10	14
11-15	10
16-20	10
21-25	14
26-30	24

Another 24% of the high school seminary students had read less than half of the last 30 days. Twenty-four percent of the students reported that they had read from 26-30 days in the last month.

Many students who were reading seemed to be having less than a meaningful experience. The students were asked how often, when they did read, they meditated, pondered, or thought seriously about what they read. Ten percent reported that they never thought seriously about what they read. Another 18% reported that they seldom did, but 47% reported that they sometimes did meditate or ponder what they read (Table 4). Twenty-two percent indicated that they often thought seriously about what they read and only 3% always did.

TABLE 4

Frequency of Pondering the Scriptures During Reading

Frequency	Percent of students
Never	10
Seldom	18
Sometimes	47
Often	22
Always	3

The results were similar when high school students were asked if, when they did read, they tried to apply the scriptures to their daily lives. Their responses are

included in Table 5.

TABLE 5

Frequency of Application of Scriptures to Daily Life

Frequency	Percent of Students
Never	7
Seldom	19
Sometimes	41
Often	27
Always	8

Causative Analysis

Students were asked to give reasons why they did read and reasons why they did not read. When students choose to read the scriptures, one of the main reasons reported was that they wanted a spiritual uplift or had a feeling of personal need (Table 6). Fifty-six percent of the students so indicated. Other reasons often mentioned were that they wanted to better understand the gospel, wanted a good grade in seminary, wanted to be obedient to church leaders, and/or wanted an answer to a problem.

TABLE 6

Reasons Reported by Students for Reading the Scriptures

Reasons	Percent of Students
Personal need/desire	40
Better understand of the gospel	22
Obey church leaders	19
Better class grade	17
Spiritual uplift	16
Variety of other	11

Seminary students reported that there were two main reasons why they choose not to read the scriptures (Table 7). They reported that they had no time (47%) and/or were too tired (44%). Thus, 91% of the students reported that they were either to busy or to tired to read from the scriptures each day. These two reasons were more often mentioned by the students than any of the other reasons combined. There were another 15% who reported that they had no desire to read and 13% who said that they forget. Others simply admitted that they were lazy.

TABLE 7

Reasons Reported by Students for not Reading the Scriptures

Reasons	Percent of students
Too tired	47
No time	44
No desire	15
Forget	13
Too lazy	8

In the survey students were asked if they read the scriptures together as a family (Table 8). Twenty-nine percent of the students reported that they never read the scriptures as a family and 23% reported that they seldom read together as a family. There were 18% of the students who reported that they sometimes read; 14% indicated that they often read, and 17% of the students reported that they always read each day from the scriptures as a family.

TABLE 8

Frequency of Daily Scripture Reading as a Family

Frequency	Percent of students
Never	29
Seldom	23
Sometimes	18
Often	14
Always	17

Huck (1992) reports that the greatest motivator to stimulating reading is for parents to read to their children. The survey indicated that parents were not reading the scriptures to their children nor were they reading them with their children. Students surveyed indicated that they were not reading because they were too tired and/or did not have time. Students generally have time to do what motivates them. The fact of the matter was that they lacked motivation.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Reading, in general, is on the endangered list (Loving, 1984). Reading, like other pursuits, is often not fully appreciated until it is nearly lost, consequently, reading programs are being initiated (Cullinan, 1989). There are, however, those who believe that, among adults, reading may actually be increasing (Fowles, 1993). To support his contention, Fowles cites magazine and book sales. He claims that they have been increasing at a greater rate than the population. He also cites studies indicating that a larger number of people, when asked if they read a book or a magazine yesterday, answer "yes". A regular study of the scriptures will help people to lead lives with less frustration and increased happiness (Pinnock, 1984).

Huck (1992) contends that frequency of children and adult reading is decreasing. A study of California fifth graders indicates that their outside of school reading is

about four minutes per day (Anderson, 1985). Ezra Taft Benson (1988), past leader of the sponsoring institution, chastened church members when he told them that they had neither said enough or done enough about regularly reading from the scriptures.

Students will not read things that they perceive as being boring (Mellon, 1992). Over his 26 year career with CES, the writer has often heard his students classify the scriptures in this manner. Today's students are overprogrammed with music lessons, dance lessons, tennis lessons, and art lessons (Huck, 1992). With so much to keep them occupied, why would they spend time reading that which they perceive as being boring? President Benson (1882) again chastened his members by telling them that many parents had abandoned their family responsibilities.

Many of the high school age students are over programmed and are very busy and are tired. Others are lazy and not focused. Television, video games, work, and a myriad of other interests have pushed scripture reading out of the lives of many students. Parents are shirking their responsibility by not motivating their children to read. This is especially true with reading of the scriptures.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goals of the writer were that each student read at least one chapter each day from the Book of Mormon during the 1994-95 school year. By doing this he/she will read all of the book of scripture during that school year. Each student will ponder what is read and regularly apply it to his/her life.

Expected Outcome

The practicum would be considered successful if 50% of the students read at least one chapter from the Book of Mormon each day, and if 50% of the students reported that they "often" pondered the scriptures and applied them to their daily life.

Measurement of Outcomes

Prior to the school year, teachers received inservice instruction relative to the expected outcomes of the practicum. Students reported to their teacher each month relative to their daily reading of the Book of Mormon. As the practicum concluded, the students responded to the same survey as administered at the beginning of the practicum (see appendix B). This dealt with their reading, pondering and application habits. The results were tabulated to

determine whether that part of the practicum was successful.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Few students were reading a chapter a day from the scriptures. Few students were pondering what they read and looking for ways to apply what they read to their daily lives. Motivating students to read daily, meditate on what they read, and apply what they read to their lives would be challenging, but if successful, would be very rewarding.

It is well known that students perform better when parents have higher expectations (Natriello and McDill, 1986). Parents are the most important predicator in children's reading habits. There are those who feel that parents sharing books with children may be the most powerful and significant predictor of school achievement (Edwards, 1992). While some parenting skills are acquired by instinct, other skills must be sought after and learned. Parents need training in order to help their children (Vukelich, 1984). Educators can play a vital role in helping parents help their children, but teachers need training in how to communicate with parents (Hamachek, 1984).

Not only do parents and teachers help shape the reading habits of children, interested others can also have an

influence. Teenage peers is one group that can have a great deal of impact (Greaney, 1986). There are many students who are reading the scriptures daily. Respected adults, such as church leaders, could have a positive influence on reading habits of students.

Mellon (1992) found that pleasure readers are made, not born. Consequently, if students are to read from the scriptures on a daily basis, they must receive some direction in this endeavor. Elder Howard W. Hunter (1979), President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the sponsoring institution, gives the following direction for any person who wants scripture reading to become a meaningful part of his/her daily life: 1) have a set time, 2) have a set amount of time, 3) pray for understanding, 4) contemplate or ponder what is read.

Description of Selected Solution

Virtually all of the parents who are active in the church which sponsors the seminary program want their children to attend the seminary classes. They and their church leaders feel that society has strayed from the basic Christian principles contained in holy writ. They also feel that the rate at which society is abandoning traditional Christian values is accelerating. They cite as evidence the increase in violence, crime, abortion, homosexuality, promiscuity, aids, and many other often socially accepted "transgressions". Parents and leaders desperately want

their youth to avoid the tragedy. They firmly feel that the daily spiritual nourishment which comes from scripture reading will be a great asset for their children (Pinnock, 1984).

In the pre-practicum survey which was administered to the students, 56% of those students who did read reported that they did so because of the feeling of a personal need and/or a spiritual uplift (Table 6). A most interesting result of the survey indicated that 91% of the students reported that they did not read because they are either too tired or they did not have time (Table 7). It was also interesting to note that 42% of the students reported that they seldom or never read the scriptures with their families (Table 8). Another 18% reported that they read together only sometimes.

It is the opinion of the writer that those students who were reading daily and pondering the scriptures continued to do so because of the personal feeling of gratification each received. It is also the opinion of the writer that the reasons given for not reading by students who choose not to read, are simply poor excuses. While it is true that many students are over programmed, they still find time to do the things that they want to do. If they really wanted to read from the scriptures on a daily basis, they could find the 10-15 minutes. It is the opinion of the writer that students choose not to read from the scriptures on a daily

basis simply because they do not want to and have not yet discovered its value. It is also the opinion of the writer that they will continue to not read the scriptures until something happens to motivate them to read.

If daily scripture reading is important, if it will give the spiritual nourishment desperately needed, parents and interested others (church leaders) must get involved. Other than the students themselves, parents are the highest stake holders.

For the purpose of the practicum, the writer chose to implement the following:

1. Because the volume of scripture being taught during the next school year was the Book of Mormon, the writer would initiate a Book of Mormon reading project. The project would focus on reading a chapter from the Book of Mormon each day, pondering what was read, and looking for ways to apply what was read to their daily lives.

2. Parents would be involved and encouraged to read along with their children. It would be difficult for parents to motivate their children to read if they were not scripture readers themselves. They would have a calendar provided with a reading schedule. Parents would be encouraged to monitor their children's reading. Each family would be asked to value the project as their own.

3. Church leaders from each local congregation (ward) would be asked to become involved in the reading project.

The various levels of ward leadership would be asked to monitor and to give encouragement. If the project was to be effective, these leaders would have to buy into the project as though it were their own. They would, of course, need to be readers themselves.

4. The seminary teachers would be trained in all aspects of the reading project. They would be invited to look at the project as "our Book of Mormon reading project" and not the "writer's practicum" or "their supervisor's project". They, of course, would need to be daily scripture readers. In their classes they would monitor the progress of each student, give motivational lessons, and lessons on how to make their reading more meaningful.

In the pre-practicum survey students indicated that few of them were reading daily. When asked how many of 9 months of the last school year they had read daily, 29% indicated that they had not read daily any month. Another 26% had read daily for less than 4 months. Only 17% of the students reported that they had read daily for all 9 months of the previous year.

To the date of the pre-practicum survey, students had been in school 5 months during the school year. When asked how many of the 5 months they had read daily, 30% had not read daily any month. An additional 30% had read daily for 3 months or less. Only 29% of the seminary students had read daily all five months of that school year. Students

reported that 28% of them had read less than 5 days out of the past 30 days.

The survey indicated that students were not only not reading, they were not pondering or applying what they did read. The writer felt that the selected solution described above would prove to be very beneficial to students. He strongly felt that parents, ecclesiastical leaders, and seminary teachers working together could accomplish much more than any of them working individually.

Report of Action Taken

CES provides 12 weeks of optional summer employment for its full-time employees and all of the instructors in the seminary involved in the practicum took advantage of that opportunity. At the beginning of the summer the writer introduced the reading project to his staff, trained them concerning its details, solicited their support, and encouraged them to read along with their students. Teachers were excited about the possibilities of the project and quickly became active participants.

The administrative units of the sponsoring church are called wards and stakes. A ward is a congregation of about 250-550 members and is presided over by a bishop and his two counselors. A stake (like a diocese) is an administrative unit of about 5-10 wards and is presided over by a stake president and two councilors. The writer met individually with the president of each stake, explained the project to

him, and solicited his support. Each was very supportive and wanted the project to be successful in his stake.

The writer and the four stake presidents met together to discuss and outline the project. From that meeting the writer formulated a plan of action. At a subsequent meeting he presented the plan to the stake presidents and the plan was approved. Details of the action plan are contained in Appendix C, "Cooperative Book of Mormon Reading Project" and Appendix D, "Family, Ward, Stake, Seminary Book of Mormon Reading Project".

Members of the church which sponsors the seminary have great respect for their priesthood leaders. This is especially true of their stake presidents. It was felt that, to insure greatest acceptance and ultimate success, the president of each stake should introduce the project to each ward bishop. The bishop would then introduce the project to his ward members. As stake leaders met in the wards, they would take the opportunity to express their support and to encourage members to successfully complete the project.

It was felt by the writer and the stake presidents that at each level of leadership, each must feel ownership of the project. Each stake president must feel that this is "our" project that we are completing as a stake. The same would be true of each ward, family and class.

The writer provided each stake president and bishop

with statements from General Church Authorities (high ranking church leaders) concerning the value of reading the scriptures and of reading the Book of Mormon. A reading chart and a reading schedule were also provided (see appendix E). These reading charts and schedules were duplicated by stake and ward leaders and provided for each member of each family. Charts and schedules were given by teachers to each student that enrolled in seminary.

Each stake president requested that each bishop introduce the project to his ward. It was left to the discretion of the bishops how this was accomplished. It was, however, to be completed before school began in late August. The writer took the opportunity to enter several church buildings and observed that the materials were there and available to the members.

The sponsoring institution has priesthood holders who visit each family in the ward each month. Some of the bishops requested that the project materials be delivered to each family through its "home teacher". The writer's family received their materials in this manner. The home teacher was unaware that the writer had put the project package together.

During the first complete week of school, each seminary teacher presented the reading project to each of his/her classes. Reading schedules and charts were again provided (Appendix E). Students kept these materials in their

binders and marked them each day as they came to class. During the first few weeks of class teachers occasionally gave special lessons designed to motivate students to read each day. These lessons also taught the students the value of reading daily, how to develop reading habits, and how to better understand what was read. Students were also encouraged to ponder what was read and to apply it to their daily lives.

Motivating students to read was a very important part of the project. Each month each student was to be part of a motivating activity. These activities were alternately sponsored by the seminary, the wards, and the stakes. The first Saturday evening after school began, the seminary sponsored an activity to which all students from the seven seminaries in the valley were invited. The speaker gave an inspirational message on the value of scripture study. The evening concluded with a dance. Each seminary teacher and each ward youth leader were to remind students to read and to monitor their reading progress.

As another motivational item, the seminary printed special scripture reading certificates. When each student had read consecutively for 30 days, his/her certificate was placed on the wall. When each student had read an additional 30 days, a special sticker was placed on the certificate (Appendix F).

Each student had two sets of scriptures. One set was

to be used at seminary and the other set was used at home. Ward leaders and seminary teachers noted which students did not have scriptures and there was an effort to secure them for each student. Some students' reading ability was below scripture level. The seminary secured the Book of Mormon on cassette tape and students needing them could check them out from the seminary secretary. Several did so.

Each one of the full time teachers in the seminary became the representative to each of the stakes. He regularly contacted each stake president to determine if he had any questions, needs, and to bring the project again to his attention.

After the reading portion of the practicum had begun, the writer wished to determine the extent to which students had been informed about the reading program in their wards. A survey was conducted and the results are reported in Chapter V.

The seminary student leaders were active in the project. They conducted activities which were designed to reward those who were reading and to motivate nonreaders.

A former U.S. Secretary of Education, William Bennett said that "not every teacher is a parent, but every parent is a teacher" (Hester, 1989, p. 25). The practicum assisted parents in their stewardship and was a great help to ecclesiastical leaders.

At the conclusion of the practicum, the writer

administered a post-practicum survey. This was the same survey administered to the students one year earlier. Changes are discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer is a religious educator for the Church Educational System (CES) sponsored by his church. He is in his 26th year of employment. In his current setting he is the principal of a released time seminary which operates on church owned property close to the high school. Upon request of their parents, 511 students are released from the school each day to attend classes in religious instruction.

Parents and church leaders feel that society has strayed from the basic Christian principles contained in holy writ. They cite as evidence the rapid increase of socially accepted "transgressions". Parents and church leaders strongly feel a daily nourishment from the scriptures would do much to bolster the moral strength of their children and thereby they would avoid such sorrow and tragedy.

As documented in the practicum, scripture reading at the seminary was not taking place among students to the extent desired by CES administrators or ecclesiastical leaders. When asked in a pre-practicum survey how many of the 9 months of the previous school year they had read the entire month, 29% indicated that they had not read daily any month. Fifty-two percent had read less than 15 of the past

30 days.

Knowing that when parents, teachers, and interested others (in this case, ecclesiastical leaders) work together in the education of their children, they can accomplish much more than when they work individually (Blackie, 1991), the writer initiated a scripture reading program. The program called for the cooperation of parents, students, ecclesiastical leaders, and seminary teachers. Because the course of study during the year of the practicum was the Book of Mormon, that volume was selected to read.

Results

The writer stated in Chapter III that the practicum would be considered successful if 50% of the students reported that they read at least one chapter from the Book of Mormon each day, and if 50% of the students reported that they "often" pondered the scriptures and applied them to their daily life.

At the conclusion of the practicum the writer administered the same survey to the students as was administered one year earlier. To the date of the survey, students had been in school for five months.

In the post-practicum survey, 57% of the students reported that they had read daily for at lease four of the five months (Table 9). That is up from 40% in the pre-practicum survey. Students now reported that only 21% of

them had read one month or less. This is nearly half of the 41% who so reported one year earlier.

TABLE 9

A Pre- and Post-Practicum Comparison of the Number of Months Students Read Daily During the Current School Year

Number of months students read daily	Pre-practicum percent of students	Post-practicum percent of students
0	30	15
1	11	6
2	7	10
3	12	12
4	11	14
5	29	43

Similar results were reported when students were asked concerning their reading in the past 30 days (Table 10). Fifty-nine percent reported having read 21 or more days during the past 30 days. This is a substantial increase from the 38% in the pre-practicum survey. In the earlier survey, 42% reported reading 10 days or less during the most month. The more recent survey indicated that now only 19% had read that few of days.

TABLE 10

A Pre- and Post-Practicum Comparison of the Number of Days Students Read in the Last 30 Days

Number of days students read	Pre-practicum percent of students	Post-practicum percent of students
0- 5	28	10
6-10	14	9
11-15	10	9
16-20	10	12
21-25	14	15
26-30	24	44

The writer felt that if 50% of the students were to read one chapter each day from the Book of Mormon, that the practicum would be successful. The writer feels that, for this portion of the practicum, it has been successful.

The other objective of the practicum was that 50% of the students at least "often" ponder and apply what they read. The results of pondering the scriptures of both the pre- and post-practicum surveys are nearly the same (Table 11). Twenty-seven percent of the students now report that they at least "often" ponder the scriptures during their reading. This is up from 25%. Slightly fewer percent of the students are now reporting that they never ponder what they read. This appears to be a slight move from 10% to 5%.

TABLE 11

A Pre- and Post-Practicum Comparison of Frequency of Pondering the Scriptures During Reading

Frequency	Pre-practicum percent of Students	Post-practicum percent of Students
Never	10	5
Seldom	18	19
Sometimes	47	49
Often	22	24
Always	3	3

There is a small decrease for those who now report that they at least "often" apply what they read to their lives (Table 12). This is down from 35% to 32%.

The practicum was to be considered successful if 50% of the students at least "often" pondered the scriptures and tried to apply them to their lives. This portion of the practicum appears not to have been successful.

TABLE 12

A Pre- and Post-Practicum Comparison of Frequency of Application of Scriptures to Daily Life

Frequency	Pre-practicum percent of students	Post-practicum percent of students
Never	7	6
Seldom	19	22
Sometimes	41	40
Often	27	25
Always	8	7

Discussion

Next to students themselves, parents have more at stake than anyone else in the education of their children (Natriello & McDill, 1986). Ezra Taft Benson (1988), then president of the sponsoring institution, chided his members when he told them that they had neither said enough nor done enough about regularly reading from the scriptures.

The writer felt that the practicum would be successful if 50% of the students read daily from the Book of Mormon, pondered what they read, and attempted to apply what they read to their daily lives.

After three months into the reading portion of the practicum, the writer wished to determine the extent to which students had been informed about the reading program in their wards. Knowing that the writer had a vested interest in the results, he eliminated the two classes he

was teaching and randomly selected 2 of the remaining 14 classes being taught in the seminary. He then conducted a survey in those classes.

There were 58 students present in those classes on the day of the survey. When asked if they had heard about the Book of Mormon reading program from their stake or ward leaders, 41 or 71% responded positively. The writer felt that this was excellent. Since the seminary has a higher attendance than does the wards at its regular Sunday or weekday meetings, the writer was pleased with the coverage.

Students had generally heard about the reading program from their stake presidents, bishops, and youth leaders. Many of the students reported hearing of the program from multiple sources. (The survey did not include the fact that all of the students were informed of the reading program in their seminary class.)

As with many programs, the initial thrust was very effective, however, there seemed to be a lack of follow up in the wards and stakes. The seminary, the wards, and the stakes were to alternate each month in holding motivational activities. Three months into the reading portion of the practicum, the students were asked if they had had any type of motivational Book of Mormon reading activity in their ward or stake. Only 7 students or 12% reported that they had had such an activity.

Students were then asked if, during the past 30 days,

they had been asked by any church leader how they were progressing on their Book of Mormon reading project. This could have been a stake, ward, or youth leader. Fourteen of the students reported that they had been asked. This was 24% of the students.

The writer choose not to take a sample survey of the parents to see if they were reading as a family or if the parents were requesting a reading report from their children. He felt that this type of survey would have a negative effect and that parents would not feel that this type of information was the responsibility of the seminary. However, in the post-practicum survey (Appendix B), the writer did ask the students if they read together as a family (Table 13).

TABLE 13

A Pre- and Post-Practicum Comparison of Frequency of Daily Scripture Reading as a Family

Frequency	Pre-practicum percent of students	Post-Practicum Percent of students
Never	29	23
Seldom	23	15
Sometimes	18	18
Often	14	24
Always	17	20

There was positive movement from those who reported

that they seldom or never read as a family. This was from 52% of the families to 38% of the families. Those families who always or often read moved from 31% in the pre-practicum survey to 48%. This increase was most gratifying.

One could justifiably reason that if parents were reading with their families, that they were trying to motivate their children to read. It is interesting to compare student's pre-practicum monthly reading (at least four of the five)-29%, last 30 day reading (at least 26 days)-24%, and family reading (at least "often")-31%. For the post-practicum the results were monthly reading-43%, last 30 days reading-44%, and frequency of reading as a family at least "often"-48%. It appears that parents truly do have an effect on their children's scripture reading.

At first glance, the results of the pre- and post-practicum survey's indicate that there was little change in pondering and applying the scriptures. However, a second look needs to be taken. The pre-practicum survey indicates that about 39% were reading the scriptures daily. These students we encouraged to read chiefly through the efforts of the seminary and themselves. An additional 19% were reading regularly at the end of the practicum. That 19% were perhaps the least motivated readers. There is something to be said for just getting them to read. Once they form the habit of reading, it will be easier to encourage them to read for depth.

When total number of students are considered, more students are reading and more students are pondering and applying the scriptures to their daily life. Nevertheless, one of the objectives of the practicum was to motivate 50% of the students to ponder what they read and to apply what they read to their daily lives. This did not happen.

Much of the motivation in the church deals with "reading" the scriptures. Much less motivation deals with "reading and pondering and applying". Much of the discussion in the church expresses the feeling, that "if we can just get them to read, then the pondering and applying, will naturally come." There are many scriptural references dealing with pondering and applying and church leaders continually emphasize their importance. Locally leaders most often deal only in the "reading" realm.

Recommendations

For a successful scripture reading project, the writer has the following recommendations:

1. Paramount to the success of the program is to solicit the support of the stake president.

2. Provide the stake presidents with materials needed to help him help ward leaders motivate their members to not only read the scriptures, but to read them for meaning.

3. The project organizer should accompany the stake president to the stake bishopric meeting and assist him in presenting the program. By doing this the organizer would

demonstrate the support and unified effort necessary to follow through in an effective program.

4. To begin the project, bishops should plan a sacrament meeting around the reading project. This is the meeting where all age groups attend. After the meeting, leaders should hand out reading charts and schedules to those attending.

5. At that sacrament meeting, parents should be requested to plan a family home evening around the project. This is a meeting where family members meet together one evening each week.

6. Each home teacher should ensure that every family has the information concerning the reading project. Each month home teachers would inquire about the project as he visits each family.

7. Youth and adult leaders should follow up in their classes each week.

8. There should be an announcement in the ward bulletin each week reminding those present where they should be in their reading schedule.

9. Once each month in sacrament meeting, one of the speakers should be assigned to speak on the value of scripture reading. They should be reminded to not only read, but to ponder and to apply.

Dissemination

The presidents of the four stakes involved in the practicum also have youth that attend three other high schools and consequently three other seminaries. When the writer presented the practicum proposal to them, they immediately wanted the practicum implemented in those seminaries. The writer met with and trained the principals of those seminaries. All of the wards within the four stakes have been participating in the reading project.

The supervisor of the writer is over 21 seminaries. At a principal's meeting the area supervisor requested that the writer train all of the principals in those buildings in all aspects of the reading program. This he did. Some of the seminaries implemented the program at that time. Others will do it during the coming school year.

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APPENDIX A

CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

CES MISSION STATEMENT

CHARGE TO CES RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS

The Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The mission of the Church is to assist our Father in Heaven and His Son Jesus Christ in their grand and glorious mission "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). This mission consists of--

1. Proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

2. Perfecting the Saints by preparing them to receive the ordinances of the gospel and by instruction and discipline to gain exaltation.

3. Redeeming the dead by performing vicarious ordinances of the gospel for those who have lived on the earth.

The Mission of Religious Education in the Church Educational System

The mission of religious education in the Church Educational System is to assist the individual, the family, and priesthood leaders in accomplishing the mission of the Church, particularly as it relates to the perfecting of the Saints. This is done in a weekday setting by--

1. Teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ as found in:

   The standard works.
   The words of the living prophets

2. Effectively teaching students by precept and example so they will be encouraged, assisted, and protected as they strive to:

   Come unto Christ.
   Receive the ordinances of the gospel.
   Prepare for exaltation.

The Commission of Teachers and Leaders in CES Religious Education

The commission of teachers and leaders in religious education in the Church Educational System is to--

1. Live the gospel.
2. Teach effectively.
3. Administer appropriately.

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APPENDIX B

STUDENT SURVEY

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING SCRIPTURE READING HABITS

Please answer the following questions carefully and honestly. Please answer what you have actually done and how you actually feel. Please check your response where appropriate.

1. In what year of school are you?

___ 9th ___10th ___11th ___12th

2. Of the 9 months of school last year, how many months did you read (for at least 27 days) during that month? _____

3. Of the 5 months of school so far this year, how many months have you read (at least 27 days) during that month? _____

4. In the last 30 days, how many days have you read at least one chapter or section from the scriptures?
___0-5 ___6-10 ___11-15 ___16-20 ___21-25 ___26-30

5. When you do read from the scriptures, how often do you meditate, ponder, or think seriously about what you read?

___never ___seldom ___sometimes ___often ___always

6. When you do read from the scriptures, how often do look for ways to apply what you read to your daily life?

___never ___seldom ___sometimes ___often ___always

7. Do you read the scriptures together as a family?

___never ___seldom ___sometimes ___often ___always

8. On days when you choose to read at least one chapter or section from the scriptures, what are the reasons that you <u>do</u> read?

9. On days when you choose not to read at least one chapter or section from the scriptures, what are the reasons that you <u>do not</u> read?

APPENDIX C

COOPERATIVE BOOK OF MORMON READING PROJECT

COOPERATIVE BOOK OF MORMON READING PROJECT

1. Encouragement and cooperation from the following

   Seminary
   Parents
   Ward leaders

2. Goals and objectives
   a. Read at least one chapter each day from the Book of Mormon from September through May.
   b. Read all of the Book of Mormon.
   c. Meditate on what is read.
   d. Look for ways to apply what is read to daily life.

3. Some kind of a "kick off" explaining the goals and objectives.

   For the students it would probably be in the seminary class.

   For the parents and ward leaders could be the following:

   Ward or Stake Fireside for parents and ward leaders.
   OR
   Introduced in last Sacrament Meeting in August.
   OR
   Perhaps a meeting soliciting support of ward leaders.
   OR
   Something else.

4. Daily monitoring by parents and seminary teachers.
   Weekly monitoring by ward leaders.

5. Monthly motivational activities

   Ward--October, January, April

   Stake--December, March

   Seminary--November, February

   Concluding banquet in May

6. Other items

   a. Each student would need a set of scriptures for the seminary and home.
   b. Each ward would need a set of Book of Mormon cassette tapes.
   c. This becomes <u>OUR</u> project and not just a seminary project.
   d. If parents are going to be effective in motivating their children to read, they will have to read.
   e. If ward/stake leaders are going to be effective in motivating their youth to read, they will have to read.

APPENDIX D

FAMILY-WARD-STAKE-SEMINARY BOOK OF MORMON READING PROJECT

A. The project's guiding principles

1. The prophet Joseph Smith said: "I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.
2. Heavenly Father wants us to read, ponder, and study The Book of Mormon.
3. We live in "perilous times". Sin is rampant throughout the world. The salvation of each person is being challenged from every direction.
4. "The word" has a greater effect to lead people to do that which is just than anything else. (Alma 31:5)
5. A daily nourishment of "the word" is vital for the youth of zion.
6. Each time the reading project is presented, it must be presented as "our" project. It will be much less effective if it is the seminary's project. Each level of leadership must buy into the project as though it were theirs.
7. If a person is going to effectively motivate another to read, ponder, and study The Book of Mormon, he/she must be reading, pondering, and studying.

B. Implementation schedule

1. July, 1994
   Stake President will introduce the reading project to the following groups and solicit their support:
   High Council
   Stake Council
   Bishops

   The ward bishops will introduce the reading project to the Ward Council and solicit the support of each person.

3. August, 1994
   The ward bishops will introduce the reading project to the Bishops Youth Committee and solicit the support of each.

   The ward bishops will introduce the reading project to the entire ward and encourage each person to read The Book of Mormon during the school year.

   The seminary teachers will present the project to each student in each class and commit each student to read the Book of Mormon during the school year. They will give special lessons on how to make their time spent in reading more valuable.

4. September, 1994
Ward youth leaders will monitor the reading progress of each youth in their ward. (This youth leader monitoring program will take place each month.) The ward youth leaders will hold a motivational activity centered around the reading project.

Each week throughout the year, the seminary teachers will monitor the reading progress of each student.

Parents will monitor the reading progress of each child.

The seminary teachers will communicate with the parents of each student.

5. October, 1994
In addition to monitoring of the parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the seminary will hold a reading motivational activity.

6. November, 1994
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the stake young men's and women's presidency will hold a reading motivational activity.

7. December, 1994
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the ward youth leaders will hold a reading motivational activity.

8. January, 1995
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the seminary will hold a reading motivational activity.

9. February, 1995
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the stake young men's and women's presidency will hold a reading motivational activity.

10. March, 1995
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the ward youth leaders will hold a reading motivational activity. The seminary teachers will communicate with the parents of each student.

11. April, 1995
In addition to monitoring of parents, ward youth leaders, and the seminary teachers, the seminary will hold a reading motivational activity. By the end of

April, 1995, everyone should have read all of The Book of Mormon.

12. May, 1995
Sponsored by the Stake Presidencies and organized by the seminary teachers, all of the students who read all of The Book of Mormon and who read consecutively for 7 of the 8 months will be invited to a banquet and/or the ward would organize some type of concluding/ rewarding activity.

C. Other organizational items

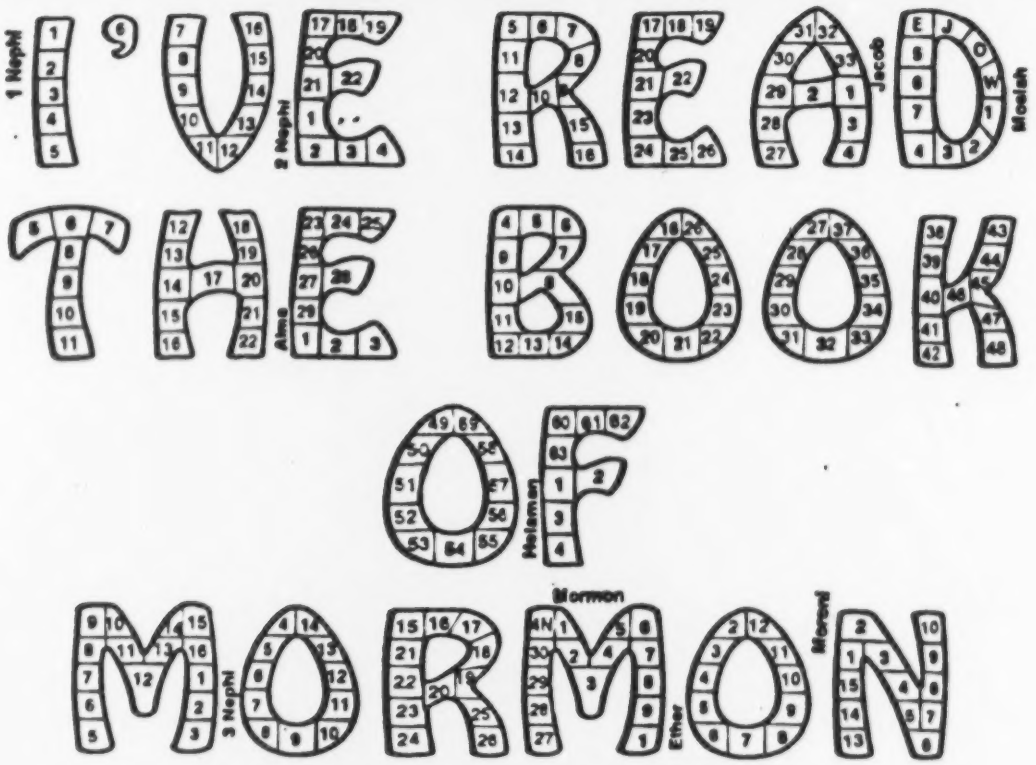
1. The project will focus on reading from the Book of Mormon each day, pondering what is read, and looking for ways to apply what was read to their daily lives.
2. Parents and ward leaders will be encouraged to read along with the youth.
3. The seminary will provide a calendar and a reading schedule for each person.
4. One member of the seminary faculty will be assigned as the stake representative.
5. It is suggested that the member of the stake presidency for youth programs be the stake representative.
6. It is suggested that the bishop be the ward representative.
7. The seminary representative will supply stake and ward leaders with motivational items such as statements from the general authorities, selected scriptural passages etc.
8. Each student should have two sets of scriptures. One set will be used at home and the other will be used in the classroom.
9. The seminary and each ward should have available a copy of The Book of Mormon on cassette tape for those students whose reading skills are below scripture level.
10. Ward reading banquet

APPENDIX E

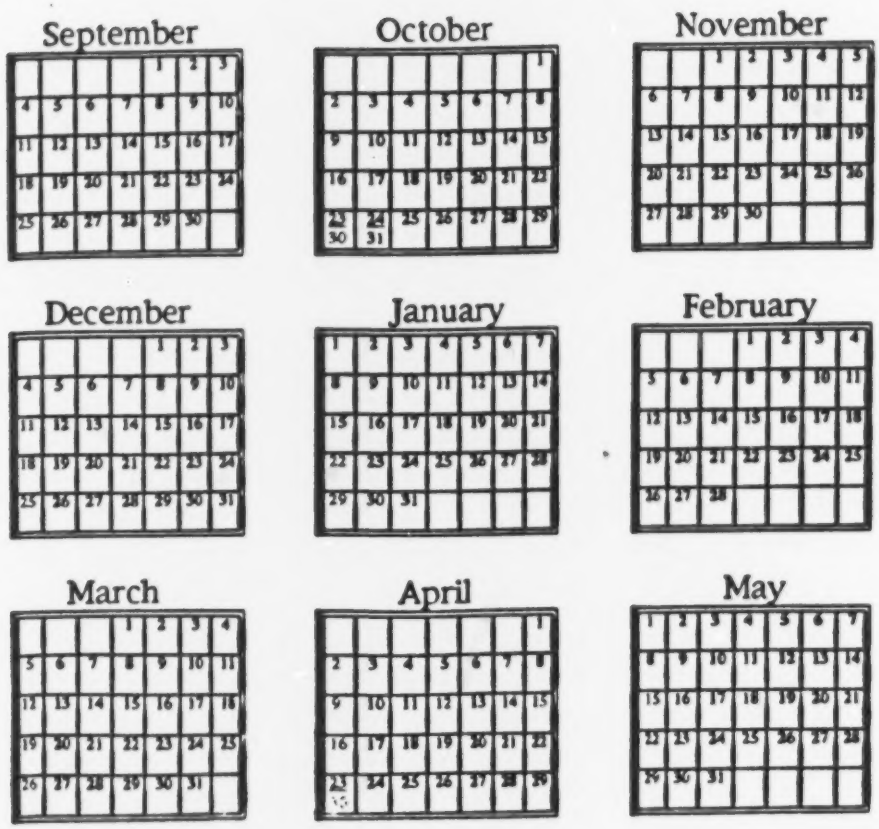
BOOK OF MORMON READING SCHEDULE AND CHART

SCRIPTURE STUDY PROMISES FROM THE BRETHREN

PROMISES FROM THE BRETHREN FOR STUDYING THE BOOK OF MORMON


I'VE READ
THE BOOK
OF
MORMON
1 Nephi
2 Nephi
Jacob
Mosiah
Alma
Helaman
3 Nephi
Mormon
Ether
Moroni

51


September
October
November
December
January
February
March
April
May

Book of Mormon Reading Schedule

By the month

by September 30, 1994	through page 67	through 2 Nephi 5
by October 31, 1994	through page 135	through Jacob 7
by November 30, 1994	through page 202	through Mosiah 27
by December 31, 1994	through page 271	through Alma 24
by January 31, 1995	through page 339	through Alma 51
by February 28, 1995	through page 403	through Helaman 14
by March 31, 1995	through page 472	through Mormon 2
by April 30, 1995	through page 531	through Mormoni 10

By the week

By September	4	through page 7	through 1 Nephi 3
	11	23	1 Nephi 12
	18	41	1 Nephi 17
	25	60	2 Nephi 2
By October	2	through page 77	through 2 Nephi 9
	9	93	2 Nephi 22
	16	109	2 Nephi 28
	23	125	Jacob 4
	30	140	Jarom 1
By November	6	through page 157	through Mosiah 4
	13	172	Mosiah 12
	20	186	Mosiah 20
	27	204	Mosiah 28
By December	4	through page 217	through Alma 4
	11	237	Alma 11
	18	250	Alma 16
	25	266	Alma 22
By January	1	through page 280	through Alma 29
	8	296	Alma 35
	15	313	Alma 42
	22	328	Alma 47
	29	345	Alma 54
By February	5	through page 358	through Alma 59
	12	372	Helaman 2
	19	388	Helaman 8
	26	403	Helaman 14
By March	5	through page 417	through 3 Nephi 5
	12	433	3 Nephi 12
	19	447	3 Nephi 19
	26	463	3 Nephi 28
By April	2	through page 478	through Mormon 5
	9	491	Ether 2
	16	508	Ether 11
	23	520	Moroni 6
	30	531	Moroni 10

Scripture Study Promises From the Brethren

1. "The word of God, as found in the scriptures, in the words of living prophets, and in personal revelation, has the power to fortify the Saints and arm them with the Spirit so they can resist evil, hold fast to the good, and find joy in this life." (Ezra T. Benson, Ensign, May 1986)

2. I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns. I find myself loving more intensely those whom I must love with all my heart and mind and strength, and loving them more, I find it easier to abide their counsel. (Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball p. 135)

3. "If your students are acquainted with the revelations, there is no question--personal or social or political or occupational -- that need go unanswered. Therein is contained the fullness of the everlasting gospel. Therein we find principles of truth that will resolve every confusion and every problem and every dilemma that will face the human family or any individual in it." (Boyd K. Packer, "Teach the Scriptures," Address given on Oct. 14, 1977)

4. "More than at any time in our history, brothers and sisters, we have need for greater spirituality. The way to develop greater spirituality is to feast on the words of Christ as revealed in the scriptures." (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, May 1984, p. 7)

5. "The more familiar you are with the scriptures, the closer you become to the mind and will of the Lord and the closer you become as husband and wife and children. You will find that by reading the scriptures the truths of eternity will rest on your minds" (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, April 1988)

6. I fear that many of us rush about from day to day taking for granted the holy scriptures. We scramble to honor appointments with physicians, lawyers, and businessmen. Yet we think nothing of postponing interviews with Deity--postponing scripture study. Little wonder we develop anemic souls and lose our direction in living. How much better it would be if we planned and held sacred fifteen or twenty minutes a day for reading the scriptures. Such interviews with Deity would help us recognize his voice and enable us to receive guidance in all our affairs.
We must look to God through the scriptures. (Carlos E. Asay, Ensign, November 1978, pp. 53-54.)

7. Are you brethren continually increasing your testimony by diligent study of the scriptures? Do you have a daily habit of reading the scriptures? If we're not reading the scriptures daily, our testimonies are growing thinner, our spirituality isn't increasing in depth. We, ourselves, must be studying the scriptures and have a daily habit. (Harold B. Lee, Regional Representatives' Seminar, December 12, 1970. p. 10)

8. The scriptures that are never read will never help us. (L. Tom Perry, Ensign, May 1985, p. 23)

9. Knowledge received from studying the scriptures assist us in making correct decisions in all areas of life's activities and helps us to know God and understand his purposes. (Franklin D. Richards Ensign, May 1981, p. 51.)

10. [Speaking of a book of scriptures:] He who reads it oftenest will like it best. (Joseph Smith, TPJS, p. 56.)

11. "I think that people who study the scriptures get a dimension to their life that nobody else gets and that can't be gained in any way except by studying the scriptures. There's an increase in faith and a desire to do what's right and a feeling of inspiration and understanding that comes to people who study the gospel -- meaning particularly the standard works -- and who ponder the principles, that can't come in any other way." (Bruce R. McConkie, Church News, 24 Jan. 1976, p. 4)

12. However talented men may be in administrative matters, however eloquent they may be in expressing their views; however learned they may be in the worldly things--they will be denied the sweet whisperings of the Spirit that might have been theirs unless they pay the price of studying, pondering, and praying about the scriptures. (Bruce R. McConkie, Regional Representatives' Seminary, 2 April 1982, pp. 1-2 quoted by Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, May 1986, p. 81.)

13. I am convinced that each of us, at least some time in our lives, must discover the scriptures for ourselves--and not just discover them once, but rediscover them again and again. . .

The Lord is not trifling with us when he gives us these things, for "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." (Luke 12:48.) Access to these things means responsibility for them. We must study the scriptures according to the Lord's commandment (see 3 Ne 23:1-5); and we must let them govern our lives. (Spencer W. Kimball, Ensign, September 1976, pp.3-5)

14. We have recommended that so far as possible all the children have their own scriptures and learn to use them. (Spencer W. Kimball, Ensign, November 1977, p.4)

15. Pondering is a progressive mental pursuit. It is a great gift to those who have learned to use it. . .

By pondering, we give the Spirit an opportunity to impress and direct. Pondering is a powerful link between the heart and the mind. As we read the scriptures, our hearts and minds are touched. If we use the gift to ponder, we can take these eternal truths and realize how we can incorporate them into our daily actions. . .

We find understanding, insight, and practical application if we will use the gift of pondering. (Marvin J. Ashton, Ensign, November 1987, p. 20)

Promises from the Brethren for Studying the Book of Mormon

1. "And so, I counsel you, my beloved brothers and sisters and friends everywhere, to make reading the Book of Mormon a few minutes everyday a lifelong practice. . .

"I feel certain that if, in our homes, parents will read from the Book of Mormon prayerfully and regularly, both by themselves and with their children, the spirit of that great book will come to permeate our homes and all who dwell therein. The spirit of reverence will increase; mutual respect and consideration for each other will grow. The spirit of contention will depart. Parents will counsel their children in greater love and wisdom. Children will be more responsive and submissive to that counsel. Righteousness will increase. Faith, hope, and charity--the pure love of Christ--will abound in our homes and lives, bringing in their wake peace, joy, and happiness" (Pres. Romney, Conference Report Apr. 1960. pp. 110-13)

2. I bless you with increased *understanding* of the Book of Mormon. I promise you that from this moment forward, if we will daily sup from its pages and abide by its precepts, God will pour out upon each child of Zion and the Church a blessing hitherto unknown. (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, May 1986, p. 78)

3. There is a power in the book [of Mormon] which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the strait and narrow path. The scriptures are called "the words of life" (see D&C 84:85), and nowhere is that more true than it is of the Book of Mormon. When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance. (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, November 1986, p.7)

4. Perhaps there is nothing that testifies more clearly of the importance of this modern book of scripture than what the Lord Himself has said about it.

By His own mouth He has borne witness (1) that it is true (D&C 17:6), (2) that it contains the truth and His words (D&C 19:26), (3) that it was translated by power from on high (D&C 20:8), (4) that it contains the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ (D&C 20:9; 42:12), (5) that it was given by inspiration and confirmed by the ministering of angels (D&C 20:10), (6) that it gives evidence that the holy scriptures are true (D&C 20:11), and (7) that those who receive it in faith shall receive eternal life (D&C 20:14). (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, November 1986, p.4)

5. Every Latter-day Saint should make the study of this book a lifetime pursuit. Otherwise he is placing his soul in jeopardy and neglecting that which could give spiritual and intellectual

unity to his whole life. There is a difference between a convert who is built on the rock of Christ through the Book of Mormon and stays hold of that iron rod, and one who is not. (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, May 1975, p.65)

*

6. To the Children of the Church

How pleased I am to hear of your love for the Book of Mormon. I love it too, and Heavenly Father wants you to continue to learn from the Book of Mormon every day. It's Heavenly Father's special gift to you. By following its teachings, you will learn to do the will of our Father in Heaven. (Ezra Taft Benson, Ensign, May 1989, pp. 81-82)

7. To the Young Men of the Church

Young men, the Book of Mormon will change your life. It will fortify you against the evils of our day. It will bring a spirituality into your life that no other book will. It will be the most important book you will read in preparation for a mission and for life. A young man who knows and loves the Book of Mormon, and who has read it several times, who has an abiding testimony of its truthfulness, and who applies its teachings will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and will be a mighty tool in the hands of the Lord. ("To the Young Men of the Priesthood," pamphlet, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986, pp. 3-4)

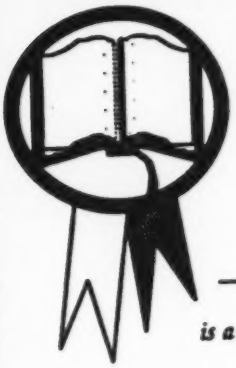
8. To the Young Women of the Church

Young women, the Book of Mormon will change your life. It will fortify you against the evils of our day. It will bring a spirituality into your life that no other book will. It will be the most important book you will read in preparation for life's challenges. A young woman who knows and loves the Book of Mormon, who has read it several times, who has an abiding testimony of its truthfulness, and who applies its teachings will be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and will be a mighty tool in the hands of the Lord. ("To the Young Women of the Church," pamphlet, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986, p. 4)

Scrquote.BM

APPENDIX F

CONSECUTIVE READING CERTIFICATE AND STICKERS



Consecutive Reading Club

This certifies that

_____

is a member of the Consecutive Reading Club and is commited to daily study of the scriptures.

_____ _____

Date *Seminary Instructor*

Feast on the Word

Feast on the Word

Feast on the Word

Feast on the Word

BEST COPY AVAILABLE